

Glossary of Railroad Terminology & Jargon

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Terminology	Definition
	286,000 lbs.
286	Rail track segments with 286,000 lbs. or 143-ton car capacity restrictions. A section of track with a 286 restriction cannot handle cars with lading weight of 143 tons or more.
	Third Party Logistics
3PL	Third-party logistics and/or service provider who acts on behalf of a shipper or carrier. A 3PL may also be referred to as an IMC (Intermodal Marketing Company), freight forwarder, transportation broker or intermediary.
	Association of American Railroads
AAR	The Association of American Railroads represents North America's major freight railroads and Amtrak. Association members include the BNSF, UP, KCS, CSXT, NS, CP, CN, TFM and FNM.
ABI	Automated Broker Interface
	Switching Payables
Absorbed Switching	Payment by a carrier, out of its revenue on a shipment, of the charges assessed by others for switching of its cars.
	Charges for a wide variety of services and privileges that are made available in connection with the transportation of goods. They include all charges other than freight charges. E.g., charges for services such as detention, spotting, rejected loads, equipment furnished but not used, reconsignment storage etc. Glossary Top
Accesorial Charges	
	Automatic Clearing House
ACH	Electronic means of receiving payment for linehaul charges from customers.
	Any system to provide for automated identification of cars in a train. The commonly used system consists of a set of 13 reflective "modules" on each side of a car, caboose, locomotive, container, or trailer, which identifies the owner, number and equipment.
ACI	
ACS	Automated Commercial System

Actual Placement (AP)	Car placed at a customer location waiting for loading or unloading. Also known as Active Placement.
	Automatic Equipment Identification (AEI) Reader or Tag
AEI	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AEI Readers (interrogators) are installed at strategic points such as plant entrance and/or exit points, railroad junction points etc. to read AEI tags. Also known as Automatic Car Identification or Rail Car Identification tags. 2. AEI tags (transponders) store certain information about the rail car, such as the owner and car number. Tags can be mounted on trailers, railcars, containers and locomotives. As tagged equipment passes a reader, the tag identifies the equipment and the reader relays the time, date or other programmed information to a host computer.
Allowance Contract	<p>Incentive Agreement</p> <p>Rail agreements specifying a contract allowance or incentive payment based on a minimum threshold. The minimum threshold may involve volume increases, improved balance, private equipment or equipment conversion, street time improvement etc. Glossary Top</p>
AMS	Automated Manifest System. Means of speeding the flow of cargo through an electronic release notification system.
Ancillary Agreement	Multi-party agreement ancillary to a contract usually signed by a railroad and its customers for large volumes of business. These agreements involve the beneficial owner, the railroad, and the appropriate channel participant(s).
Assigned units	Rail-controlled units assigned to a nonasset-based shipper such as an IMC. The purpose of taking units under assignment is so that the units will not be returned empty to the ramp and will constantly be re-loaded and shipped in a high volume lane on the rail. In return, the customer typically receives a lower per diem rate
Availability	Arrival times for intermodal and over-the-road freight. Cutoff- to-availability tables reflect transit times of shipments.
Availability Time	Time equipment is grounded and available for pick-up by the customer.

Back Haul	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Haul a shipment over part of the reverse route the car traveled with the initial load. 2. Shipment hauled back over part of or the entire route of the car. 3. Shipment moving in the direction of the light flow of traffic. 4. Picking up a load in a piece of equipment that normally runs empty.
Bad Order	<p>Car awaiting or undergoing repairs</p> <p>A freight car loaded improperly, mechanically defective, or with safety violations Glossary Top</p>
Ballast	Stone or gravel placed in a roadbed to provide a sturdy surface for the track and to facilitate drainage.
Bare Table	Intermodal flat cars moving empty, with no vans or containers on them.
Beneficial Owner	Person or legal entity who owns or has title to the freight being transported. Beneficial owners may use freight third parties such as IMCs to negotiate transportation services and rates on their behalf.
Bill of Lading (BOL)	See Shipping Instructions
Bill Road	<p>Billing Carrier</p> <p>Carrier performing the first line haul service of the movement. This carrier is responsible for preparing the waybill document and transmitting the information to any following carriers.</p>
Blocking or Bracing	Wooden, metal, or other approved support to keep shipments in place on railcars or within containers and trailers.
Bonded Warehouse	Warehouse owned by persons approved by the Treasury Department, an under bond or guarantee for the strict observance of the revenue laws; utilized for storing goods until duties are paid or goods are otherwise properly released.
Bonds	<p>61 - IT: Immediate Transportation</p> <p>62 - T&E: Transportation and Exportation</p> <p>63 - IE: Immediate Exportation</p> <p>69 – Transit</p> <p>70 – Multi-transit</p>
Box Car	Enclosed car used for general service and for freight that must be protected from the weather.
Bridge Move	Railroad movement involving at least three roadhaul carriers at which BNSF is neither the first or last carrier.

Broker

Individual who acts as an agent for a customer, who is attempting to route a car to a customer in Mexico or Canada. Equipment destined to a locale in Mexico is billed only to the border. At that time a broker, in cooperation with a broker in Mexico, prepares the proper paperwork. This allows the car to cross the border and proceed to its destination.

[Glossary Top](#)

Bundled Price

1. Line haul rate that includes the cost of drayage services and accessorial charges such as "free days" or per diem relief. (Intermodal freight)
2. Line haul rate that includes the combination of rail and transload costs. (Carload freight)

Bulk Freight

Loose freight, such as coal, sand, and grain handled in its natural state, and not packaged, or boxed in individual units or containers.

Bulkhead Flat

Flat cars equipped with fixed or permanently attached movable bulkheads or ends a minimum of 3 feet in height and flat floor for general commodity loading.

CAMIR

Customs Automated Manifest Interface Requirements. Specific procedures for the importing trade communities that are interested in participating in the AMS.

Capacity

1. General Capacity: Rail demand or volume. The factors affecting capacity for a railroad are numerous. These include for example; crews, track, locomotives, equipment etc.
2. Car Capacity: Cubic foot capacity of a railcar with the exception of a flat car. The nominal car capacity refers to numeric capacity, in thousands of pounds, as stenciled on the car and defined by the AAR.
3. Line or track Capacity: Maximum number of trains that can operate safely and reliably in each direction over a given segment of track during a given period of time (e.g., 24 hours)
4. Locomotive Capacity: Locomotives available to move demand

Capitalized Costs
Car

Expenditures that have future benefit and thus are recorded as assets
Freight car bearing railroad reporting marks

Car Init & Number

Car Initial and Number (Sometimes referred to as CARINO)
Initial and number given to a railcar by the AAR in conjunction with owner's initials as a means of car identification [Glossary Top](#)

Car Initial	4-byte initial of the unit that carried the commodity. Usually this 4-byte initial is stenciled on the equipment. A unit is a car, van or container. Trailer initials usually ends in Z as in JBHZ and container initials in U, e. g., JBHU.
Carload	Shipment of not less than 5 tons of one commodity
Car Hire	Compensation to be paid by a user to an owner for use of a car. Such compensation may include, but need not be limited to, hourly and mileage rates.
CBP	Customs and Border Protection
Chassis	Supporting frame of a vehicle, trailer, or container, usually including the wheels or engine onto which the metal container or trailer is fixed for transportation
Claim	<p>Demand, supported by evidence, showing the claimant has sustained a loss through the negligence of a carrier. The principal kinds are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Damage Claim: Claim due to physical injury to shipment or because shipment was not delivered within a reasonable time. 2. Loss Claim: Claim due to failure to deliver goods. 3. Overcharge Claim: Claim when more than the legally published charges are collected. 4. Reparation Claims: Claim for a refund of charges that, while in accordance with legally published tariffs, are unreasonable or unjust and the carrier has since published the lower reasonable rate.
Class I Railroad	Railroad with operating revenues of more than \$259.4 million annually
Classification	Grouping of railcars in a yard in accordance with train movement requirements, usually by destination station or junction Glossary Top
Classification Yard	Yard in which cars are classified and grouped in accordance with movement requirements
Clearance	Limiting dimensions of a rail shipment that allow it to clear tunnels and bridges
Collect	In interline moves, the amount of transportation and other charges are paid at the point of termination of the final rail carrier
Conductor	Person responsible for the safe and proper management of the train
Connecting Carrier	Carrier that has a direct physical connection with another or forming a connecting link between two or more carriers
Connection	Railroad or station at which a rail carrier interchanges traffic

Consignee	Receiver Company receiving the shipment at destination
Consignor	Shipper Company sending the rail shipment at origin
Consist	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make-up of a freight train in terms of the car types 2. List of locomotive units, cars in train
Constructive Placement (CP)	Car that cannot be placed for loading or unloading due to some disability on the part of a shipper or receiver. The CPed car is subject to demurrage charges, the same as if it was actually placed.
Container	<p>Receptacle that resembles a truck trailer that is lifted onto flatcars without the chassis. Most containers are 20, 45, 48 or 53 feet in length.</p> <p>Glossary Top</p>
Container on Flatcar (COFC)	Movement of a container on a railroad flat car. This movement is made without the container being mounted on a chassis.
Conventional Car	Intermodal single platform flat car for conventional piggyback loading as opposed to stack loading. Designed to carry single stacked trailers or containers. They are equipped with one or two stanchions, depending on length, for shipment of one or two trailers and are about 89ft long with a tare weight of about 35 tons.
COT	<p>Certificate of Transportation</p> <p>Futures issued by Railroads to grain customers as a guarantee to present empty covered hoppers for loading at a specific location with the option to lock in a price. If the railroad does not deliver the railcar at the prescribed location and time, it pays a penalty at a rate specified in the COT.</p>
Crew District	Railroad operations territory with distinct crew characteristics such as crew rates, over mile rates, arbitraries etc.
Crossdock	Distribution facility used for the transfer of intermodal traffic for rail or truck interchange. The idea is to transfer incoming shipments directly to outgoing trailers without storing them in between. Shipments typically spend less than 24 hours at the facility, sometimes less than an hour.
Customer 6-3-3	Abbreviated 12-digit customer name
Customer Destination Instructions (CDI)	Rail location of a customer's facility
Customs Broker	<p>Company or individual licensed by the Treasury Department to act on behalf of importers/exporters in handling U.S. customs transactions</p> <p>Glossary Top</p>

Cutoff Time	Time a container or trailer must be ingated at the terminal to meet a scheduled train loading for departure. If a unit comes in after the scheduled cutoff, it is scheduled for the train coinciding with a later cut-off time. Cutoff-to-availability tables reflect transit times of shipments.
Cycle Time	Velocity Length of time consumed by a freight car from one loading to the next
Damage Free (DF)	Car equipped with special bracing devices to decrease the possibility of damage to lading <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paid crew moving on trains, without performing service, from one terminal to another at railroad's convenience 2. Any railroad employee traveling on a pass 3. Locomotive hauled by another
Deadhead	
Dedicated Train	Train that, by design, transports a dedicated commodity or type of cars. In the case of intermodal shipments, trains only carry trailers and/or containers. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A penalty charge assessed by railroads for the detention of cars by shippers or receivers of freight beyond a specified free time 2. Detention of a railcar by the shipper or receiver beyond the time allowed for loading, unloading
Demurrage	
Deramp	Lifting of intermodal containers or trailers off intermodal flatcars by special lift machines Glossary Top
Derailment	Term used when rolling equipment leaves the rail tracks
Destination	Station where rail movement terminates
Detention	Charge made on trailers or containers held by or for a consignor or consignee for loading or unloading, forwarding directions, or any other purpose
Detention Free Time	Amount of time that a vehicle detained due to improper or incomplete shipping instructions can remain at an intermodal facility without incurring detention charges
Distributed Power (DP)	Addition of a locomotive at the back of a train
Diversion	Change made in the route of a shipment in transit, the destination or consignee of a freight movement triggering a potential change in the rate and/or availability of the shipment
Dog Catcher	Rescue crew sent out to pick-up trains that had a crew run out of time on the train
Door-to-Door	Movement from the door or dock of the shipping customer to the door or dock of the receiving customer

Door-to-Ramp	Movement from the customers front door or dock to the destination intermodal ramp closest to the receiver
Department of Transportation (DOT)	U.S. government agency having jurisdiction over matters of all modes of transportation. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is the branch of the DOT that establishes safety standards for rail equipment.
Double Track	Parallel sets of main line tracks typically found in areas with high densities of traffic Glossary Top
Double-Stack	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Movement of containers on articulated rail cars that enable one container to be stacked on another container for better ride quality and car utilization 2. Flat cars enabling containers to be stacked one atop another
Drayage	<p>Dray</p> <p>Transportation of intermodal freight over-the-road from a rail head to a customer's facility. There are 6 types of drayage:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shuttle Drayage: Movement of an intermodal unit either loaded or empty from a hub to another parking lot because the railroad runs out of room at the hub 2. Expedited Drayage: Special movement of an intermodal unit over-the-road to get it there on time. This exceptional drayage usually involves time-sensitive freight. 3. Crosstown or Inter-Carrier Drayage: Dray movement of an intermodal unit "across town" to the intermodal hub of a competing or interchange rail carrier. 4. IMX or Intra-Carrier Drayage: Movement of an intermodal unit from a carrier's rail hub to the same carrier's intermodal hub. An IMX dray extends the reach of an intermodal hub. 5. Door-to-door Drayage: Retail dray involving over-the-road movement of a unit to a customer location 6. Pier Drayage: Over-the-road movement of an intermodal unit from a carrier's rail hub to a port's dock or pier
Drayman	Person employed to pick up or drop off a container or trailer at an intermodal terminal Glossary Top
Dwell	Number of hours a car spends without line haul movement. Same as Demurrage.
Electronic Data Interchange (EDI)	Process of sending and retrieving information electronically

EDI 322	<p>EDI Terminal Operations Activity</p> <p>This transaction set can be used to provide all the information necessary for a terminal operator or port authority to communicate terminal activities (e.g., ingates and outgates) to authorized parties to a shipment</p>
EDI 404	<p>EDI Bill of Lading</p> <p>The EDI transaction set used in transmitting bill of lading information. This transaction set can be used to transmit rail carrier-specific bill of lading information to a railroad. It is the initial tender of a shipment between a consignor and a rail carrier and can be used as notification of equipment release and/or a legal bill of lading.</p>
EDI 410	<p>EDI Rail Carrier Freight Details and Invoice</p> <p>This transaction set can be used to provide detailed information of changes associated with a rail movement. The information is provided by a rail carrier and is sent to the freight payer.</p>
EDI 417	<p>EDI Rail Carrier Waybill Interchange</p> <p>The EDI transaction set used in transmitting rail carrier waybill interchange information. This transaction set can be used to provide the rail carrier with detailed movement instruction pertinent to a rail carrier shipment and is used by all Class 1 rail carriers in the United States and Canada. Glossary Top</p>
EDI 418	<p>EDI Rail Advance Interchange Consist</p> <p>The EDI transaction set can be used to transmit advanced information on equipment being interchanged to a connecting carrier, from a consignor or to a consignee.</p>
EDI 456	<p>EDI Railroad Equipment Inquiry or Advice</p> <p>The EDI transaction set providing multiple functions in support of a wide variety of tracing and monitoring functions including: Waybill Contents, Trip Plan Contents, and Event Data.</p>
EDI 622	<p>EDI Intermodal Ramp Activity</p> <p>This transaction set can be used to transmit specific intermodal ramp activities to consignors and other carriers or shipper agents, when the activity takes place. This activity includes in-gate, out-gate, train arrival, train departure and deramp.</p>
EDI 821	<p>EDI Payment Order/Remittance Advice</p> <p>This transaction can be an order to a financial institution to make a payment to a payee. The remittance advice can go directly from a payer to a payee through a financial institution, or through a third party agent.</p>

EDI Application Advice

EDI 824

This transaction set can be used to provide the ability to report the results of an application system's data content edits of the transaction sets. The results of editing transaction set can be reported at the functional group level or transaction set level in coded or free format.

Functional Acknowledgement

EDI 997

This transaction set can be used to define the control structure of a set of acknowledgements to indicate the results of the syntactical analysis of the electronically encoded documents. [Glossary Top](#)

Embargo

To resist or prohibit the acceptance and handling of freight. An embargo may be caused by acts of God such as tornadoes, floods, inclement weather, congestion, etc.

End-of-Train device (EOT)

Device that is installed at the rear of the train to transmit information to the train engineer

Engineer

Person who drives the train

FIRMS

Facility Information and Resources Management System. Code representing the location of the goods.

1. General rate levels offered to various types of customers (domestic, international, contract/non-contract holders) for transporting intermodal shipments
2. Freight in mixed shipments. Commodities representing 2 or more major STCC groups, where it is impossible to determine the predominant group.

Freight All Kinds (FAK)

Fuel Surcharge

Incremental charge added to a freight charge, separate from the line-haul charge, to offset increases in fuel price against the assumed cost of fuel in the initial freight charge

Flat Car

Freight car that has a floor without any housing or body above. Frequently used to carry containers and/or trailers or oversized/odd-shaped commodities. Three types of flat cars used in intermodal transportation are conventional, spine and stack cars.

Flip

Transfer of a container from one chassis to another, from the ground to a chassis or from a chassis to the ground

Foreign

All other railroads or belonging to another railroad

Federal Railroad Administration

FRA

The FRA is the branch of the DOT that establishes safety standards for rail equipment. The FRA deals specifically with transportation policy as it affects the nation's railroads and is responsible for enforcement of rail safety laws. [Glossary Top](#)

Free Time	Period allowed the owner of a rail container or trailer to accept delivery before storage or detention charges begin to accrue
Freight	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cargo or goods carried by a vehicle 2. Shipment transported 3. Compensation paid to a railroad for transporting a commodity 4. Total charges for the rail shipment from the waybill origin to the waybill destination. This does not include miscellaneous charges such as a stop to partially unload.
Freight Bill	Statement given to the customer of charges for transportation. This is information taken from the waybill.
Freight Forwarder	<p>Person or organization that assembles small shipments into one large shipment which is then tendered to a regulated over the road carrier. Upon reaching destination, the shipment is separated into small shipments and delivered.</p> <p>Freight Station Accounting Codes</p>
FSAC	5- or 6-digit reference numbers used by railroads in timetables to identify their stations
Gateway	Station or point through which freight commonly moves from one territory or carrier to another
Gondola	Freight car with sides and no roof
Grade	Degree of inclination of a railroad track or slope
Grade crossing	Crossing of highways, railroad tracks, or pedestrian walks or combinations of these on the same level
Grade Separation	Highway or railroad crossing using an underpass or overpass Glossary Top
Hazardous Material	<p>Haz Mat</p> <p>Substance or combination that because of its quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics, may cause or significantly pose a substantial hazard to human health or the environment when improperly packaged, stored, transported, or otherwise managed</p>
Hopper car	Freight car with its floor sloping to one or more doors designed for unloading the contents (such as coal or ore) by gravity
Horsepower (HP)	Measure of power. One HP = The force that will raise 33,000 pounds by 1 foot in 1 minute.
Hump Yard	Railroad classification yard in which the classification of cars is accomplished by pushing them over a summit, known as hump, beyond which they run by gravity

Ingate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Location within an intermodal ramp where entering trucks are inspected 2. Process of checking a container or trailer into the intermodal facility. The ingate process includes inspection of the unit, reservation confirmation, the input of data into a computer system. When delivering the vehicle to the facility, the drayman must state the applicable shipper and destination
Interchange	Exchange of railcars between connecting railroads at specified junction points Glossary Top
Interchange Agreement	Agreement between a railroad and a drayage company that allows a specific drayage company to drop off or pick up railroad or private intermodal equipment at the said railroad's facilities. Also known as an Equipment Interchange Agreement.
Interline Freight	Freight moving from point of origin to destination over two or more transportation lines
Interline Move	Rail traffic moving over track belonging to two or more railroads, with interline switching at the gateway
Intermodal	Mode of rail transportation that covers the multi-modal transportation of trailers and/or containers by ship, rail, and truck
Intermodal Association of North America (IANA)	Industry trade association representing the combined interests of intermodal freight transportation companies
Intermodal Marketing Company (IMC)	Company that purchases rail and truck transportation services, uses equipment from multiple sources, and provides other value-added services under a single freight bill to the ultimate shipper or beneficial owner
Intermodal Marketing Extension (IMX)	Intermodal facility that provides over-the-road transportation to and from a BNSF intermodal hub
Interterminal Switching	Switching move performed by two railroads. The first railroad moves equipment from an industry, then interchanges equipment with the second railroad for placement at an industry within the same terminal switching limits Glossary Top
Joint-Line Move	Move where one interline rate is applicable for the entire movement from rail origin to rail destination on two or more railroads. It is published in a single tariff under concurrence of participating railroads. The rate includes all interchange charges unless otherwise noted. Usually shipping instructions governing interline rates are sent to the origin carrier who forwards the shipping instructions to the other carriers in the route

Junction	Station where railroads interchange railcars at a common point or within the switching limits over their own lines, or intermediate line or lines
Lading Tons	Lading, Lading Weight, Tons or Tonnage Freight volume in tons excluding the weight of the equipment it moves in
Landbridge	Rail landbridge Containerized marine traffic that is routed via rail across the United States on traffic between the Far East and Europe/Canada in lieu of all water routes
Less Than Truckload (LTL)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shipment that would not, by itself, fill the truck to capacity by weight or volume 2. Trucking carrier that only accepts multiple small shipments for a single trailer
Line Abandonment	Discontinuation of service and maintenance on certain tracks or line segments of a railroad subject to approval of appropriate federal and state agencies
Line Haul	Movement of freight over tracks of a railroad from one station to another (not a switching service). Also known as road haul. Glossary Top
Local Freight Train	Train with an assigned crew that works between predesignated points. Local trains handle the switching outside the jurisdiction of a yard switcher.
Local Move	Traffic originating and terminating on a railroad's lines without any interchange. The one carrier serves both the origin and destination station.
Loss and Damage	"Normal" day-to-day losses and damages as a result of moving freight such as vandalism, damage due to shipping or derailments and accidents.
Maintenance of Way (MOW)	Process of maintaining roadbed (rail, ties, ballast, bridges, etc.). These materials are hauled in special maintenance of way cars, which also include cars that are equipped with heavy equipment, such as cranes and tie replacing machines.
Manifest	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Document listing the commodities within a vehicle and their quantities 2. Document listing all the railcars on a train and their contents
Manifest Train	Scheduled merchandise freight train
Merchandise Train	Freight train transporting freight other than bulk commodities

MIB	Master In-Bond
Mileage Allowance	Allowance based on mileage made by railroads to owners of privately owned freight cars
Multilevel Car	Long flatcar designed with multiple levels for transporting finished automobiles and trucks
MVOC	Master Vessel operating Carrier Glossary Top
NACS	North American Container System The North American Container System (NACS) is an Intermodal equipment program designed to facilitate the free interchange of domestic 48' and 53' containers between member railroads. NACS is an "unbundled" transportation product, meaning that transportation costs do not include equipment detention costs. In other words, the customer is responsible for detention charges when the equipment is not moving on a participating NACS railroad system. Members of NACS program include BNSF, CN, CSXI, KCS, NS and CP
NITL	National Industrial Transportation League or NIT League National trade association of transportation providers
Notification	Arrival Notice or Notification Notice furnished to the consignee of the arrival of freight
Notify	Process whereby the railroad informs the drayage provider or shipper that a unit is available for pickup. The notification will place the move in a destination dwell status.
Notify Party	Party notified at the time a container or trailer is grounded from a train. Most notify parties are draymen.
NVOCC	Non-vessel operating common Carrier
Off-line Event	Shipments that occur on rail carriers other than BNSF
Origin	Station where rail movement begins
"Out of route"	Longer or less competitive route
Outgate	Process of checking a container or trailer out of an intermodal facility. The process includes inspection of the unit, input of data into a computer system. Draymen at the out gate must indicate shipper, vehicle initial and number and assigned pick up security number. Glossary Top
Peak Season	Period of increased seasonal shipments on a railroad. Peak season for intermodal shipments is defined as September 1 to December 15. This coincides with the Thanksgiving and Christmas shipping season.
Per Diem	Charge made by a transportation line against another for the use of its cars based on a fixed rate per day
Per Diem Relief	Nullification of a charge made by a transportation line against another for the use of its cars

Piece Count	Number of individual cases, packages or bundles in an intermodal trailer or container. This information is usually required when the intermodal unit is crossing international boundaries.
Piggyback	Transportation of a highway trailer on a railroad flat car
Placard	Sign affixed to a rail car or truck, indicating the hazardous designation of the product being transported in that vehicle
Plus-car-kind	3-digit generic car grouping used by the BNSF
Prepaid	In interline moves, the amount of transportation and other charges are paid at the point of origin of the first rail carrier
Price Authority	One of the following types of pricing documents: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contract or Ancillary 2. (Exempt) Quote or Special Quote 3. Exempt Memorandum or Circular 4. Tariff
PTT	Permit to Transfer
Pup	28-foot trailer, used mostly in less-than-truckload business Glossary Top
Rail Controlled	System or Rail Controlled Equipment Railcar, trailer, or container owned or controlled by a railroad
Rail Foamer	Person who is a rail fanatic. Rail foamers enjoy train watching and keep railroad memorabilia.
Rail Served	Facility that has rail service directly to the property <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lifting of intermodal containers or trailers unto intermodal flatcars by special lift machines 2. Slang word for an intermodal terminal where trailers and containers are lifted unto departing railcars or lifted off arriving railcars
Ramp	
Ramp-to-Door	Movement of lading from the intermodal ramp closest to the customer to the receivers from door (dock)
Ramp-to-Ramp	Movement of lading from the intermodal ramp closest to the customer to the closest intermodal ramp to the receiver
Rebill	Situation where an independent or separate waybill is issued for each portion of a shipment rather than a single joint waybill, where the shipment is interchanged among competing railroads. On rebill traffic, a carrier's waybill will identify either the actual origin rail station or the actual destination rail station but not both.

Receiver	Consignee Company receiving shipment at destination Glossary Top
Reefer	Refrigerated boxcar
Reconsignment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reloading the contents of a railcar, van, or container at a station to enable resorting for export or import 2. Any change, other than a change in route, made in a consignment before the arrival of goods at their billed destination 3. Any change made in a consignment after the arrival of goods at their billed destination when the change is accomplished under conditions that make it subject to the reconsignment rules and charges of the carrier
Reciprocal Switching	Switching done by competing railroads to place equipment to industries located on the railroad
R-EDI	Rail industry's PC-based software that lets a customer input a bill of lading, which is then translated and transmitted as an EDI 404 transaction
Regional Railroad	Non-Class I, line-haul freight railroad that operates at least 350 miles of road and/or has operating revenues of at least \$40 million
REN	<p>Rate EDI Network</p> <p>This is the system at the AAR (Railinc) through which railroads electronically transmit freight transportation prices to each other. Only the carriers participating in the route are able to access confidential rates under the REN system.</p>
RIA	<p>Rail Industry Agreement</p> <p>It is a six-part pact signed by AAR Class 1 railroads and the American Shortline Association in 1998 that governs certain big railroads and small railroad activities. These activities include car supply, interchange services etc. Glossary Top</p>
Right-Of-Way	<p>Roadway</p> <p>Property owned by a railroad over which tracks have been laid</p>
Rule 11	Type of interline shipment where each railroad bills the customer separately. It is the default rate rule governing interline traffic where a joint-line rate is unavailable. Rule 11 must be indicated on the original bill of lading along with each price authority for the rail carriers involved in the movement. A cross-town transfer is not included on Rule 11 shipments that originate on BNSF.
Rule 260 Junction	<p>5-byte On or off-junction station name</p> <p>Connecting station name. This information represents the beginning of service for intermediate and interline received rail shipments.</p>

Run-through Train	Train interchanged between two roads with locomotive and cars
Safety Rating	DOT grants a safety rating to a carrier based primarily on a driver safety program audit and accident frequency. Applicable ratings are satisfactory, conditional and unsatisfactory.
Safe Container Act (SCA)	<p>or Intermodal Safe Container Act</p> <p>Federal Highway Administration act relating to overload intermodal shipments. Under the act, carriers tendering shipments with actual gross cargo weight of over 29,000 pounds (or 14.5 tons) can certify the load by providing shipping instructions and other documents with certain SCA elements. The elements include weight certification, certifying party, certification date etc. The purpose is to minimize overweight vehicles on the highway and provide recourse for a motor carrier if fined for an overload shipment. Glossary Top</p>
SCAC	<p>Standard Carrier Alpha Code</p> <p>Code used for identifying truckers, railroads, and other conveyors</p>
Scoot	Train that operates as a shuttle with as many cars as two engines can haul
Shipment Notification	Notification that a shipment has physically departed the origin that is shown on the waybill or physically arrived at the destination on the waybill
Shipper	<p>Consignor</p> <p>Company or customer shipping via rail at origin</p> <p>Bill-of-Lading (BOL)</p> <p>A shipping form that is both a receipt for property and a contract for delivery of goods by a carrier that contains customer shipping instructions to the railroad. The principal bill of lading is:</p>
Shipping Instructions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Straight: A non-negotiable document. Surrender of the original is not required upon delivery of the freight unless necessary to identify consignee. 2. Exchange: Bill of lading given in exchange for another 3. Export: Bill of lading given to cover a shipment consigned to some foreign country 4. Government: Special form of bill of lading used in making shipments for the account of the United States Government

[Glossary Top](#)

Short Haul	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Short move that is usually under 1000 miles 2. Process by which an interchange carrier changes gateways to shorten the distance of the move for the other interchange carriers and hence reduce revenues paid to them
Shortline	Small railroad that originates or terminate traffic and participates in division of revenue. It is usually less than 100 miles in length. It is usually affiliated with or sold by a major railroad. An example of a BNSF shortline is Montana Rail Link (MRL).
Shuttle	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expedited over-the-road service used for time-sensitive freight to meet service goals 2. Dedicated train set cars and locomotives that cycle continuously between origins and destinations. For corn and wheat the trains are 110 cars. Also known as a unit train.
Sideloader	Lift equipment used in intermodal ramps. Sideloaders lift containers and trailers from the side of inbound or outbound trains rather than overhead.
Siding	Track adjacent to a main or secondary track for meeting or passing trains
SNP	Secondary Notify Party. Allows AMS participants to nominate up to eight other entities to receive a copy of the status notification for an individual bill of lading.
Spine Car	Lightweight articulated car that is assembled in permanent consists of three or five platforms. Spine cars carry containers or trailers in single stack configuration.
SPLC	Station Point Location Code 4-digit station location code Glossary Top
Spot	To spot a car Position a car in a designated position or location usually for loading or unloading. This is usually at a customer location.
Spur	A track extending out from the main track that usually serves customers
Stack Car	Well car Intermodal flat car specifically designed to place one container on top of another for better utilization and economics. Also referred to as a well car because the cars are depressed in the center to allow clearance of the double stacked containers when moving under low-lying structures. A single well stack car has a tare weight of about 27.2 tons.

Staggers Act	Passed by Congress in 1980, the Staggers Rail Act deregulated the rail industry and greatly enhanced the railroad industry's ability to compete with other modes of transportation.
Standing Spotting Instructions (SSI)	Contains data used by the waybill system to determine the proper standing spotting instructions from a consignee so that cars will be sent to correct destination. That instruction is then written to the waybill for routing to the proper delivery road, zone-track-spot, care of party, etc.
Station 3-3-3	9-byte abbreviated station name
Station Master	Book or file containing consolidated rail station numbers and names
Surface Transportation Board (STB)	Independent governmental adjudicatory body administratively housed within the DOT, responsible for the economic regulation of interstate surface transportation, primarily railroads, within the United States. The STB's mission is to ensure that competitive, efficient, and safe transportation services are provided to meet the needs of shippers, receivers, and consumers. Glossary Top
STCC	Standard Transportation Commodity Code 7-digit reference code for every commodity shipped in transportation
Storage Charge	Charge assigned to the shipper or consignee for holding containers or trailers at an intermodal terminal beyond the free time allotted to them
Storage Track	Auxiliary track used for storage
Street Time	Time a container or trailer is away from the possession of the railroad
Street Interchange	Transfer of financial responsibility of a unit from one trucking carrier to another on a date and time specified by the drayage firm in control of that container or by an IMC that has financial responsibility for that particular container
Switching	Movement of freight cars between two close locations. Typically involves moving cars within a yard or from specific industry locations to a yard for placement on a train or vice versa.
Switch Fees	Railroads charge switch fees to other railroads it allows into a facility it serves. Unabsorbed charges will be added to the freight bill.
System Equipment	Equipment owned or leased by a railroad. Each railroad considers its own equipment as system equipment
Tank Car	Any car used only for transporting liquids, liquefied gases, compressed gases, or solids that are liquefied or compressed prior to loading
Tare Weight	Tare Weight of clean, empty equipment, i.e., the car contains no lading or packing and debris resulting from the lading

Tariff	<p>Pricing document that covers strictly regulated shipments. Each tariff is public record and is on file with the STB. These documents are usually not customer specific and are often used as reference for other prices created by a carrier. Tariffs allow customers to get consistency in pricing by comparing their situation to existing prices on record.</p> <p>Glossary Top</p>
Team Track	Side track on which cars are placed for the use of the public in loading or unloading of freight
Terminal	Railroad facility used for handling freight and the receiving, classifying, assembling and dispatching of trains
Terminal Dwell Time	<p>Average hours a car is at the specified terminal location expressed in hours. The measurement begins with a customer release, received interchange, or train arrival event and ends with a customer placement (actual or constructive), delivered interchange, or train departure event. Heavy, bad ordered, stored, and maintenance of way cars are generally excluded from the calculation.</p>
Thru-Rate	Rate applicable from point of origin to point of destination. It may be a joint rate or a combination of two or more rates.
Trackage Rights	Rights that a railroad secures with a competing railroad to move freight over the foreign road's trackage. The home road pays per car and mileage fees to the foreign road for trackage rights payments. The home road uses its own locomotives, crews, fuel etc.
Track and Trace	Process of monitoring freight order, freight car or shipment through its transportation lifecycle. This includes events such as train arrival, train departure, shipment notification etc.
Track Lease	Customer may lease track from a railroad to spot or store their cars. The railroad usually maintains the track at the customer's expense.
Trailer	<p>Van</p> <p>Rectangular shaped box with permanent wheels attached for the transport of goods on rail, highway, or a combination of both Glossary Top</p>
Trailing Ton	Total lading tons and tare tons of a train
Transit	Time that a unit is on the railroad. Intermodal transit starts from the ingate load at origin and goes until the notification at destination. Transit calculates the amount of time a railroad was in possession of a unit and how long it took to ship that unit from point A to point B.
Transload	Facility used for transferring shipments from truck to rail and vice versa
Transshipment	Shipments transferred from one transportation line to another, particularly from rail to a water carrier or vice versa

Truckload (TL)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shipment that fills a trailer or a container to its maximum capacity, either by weight or volume 2. Carrier that accepts only truckload shipments
TTX	Railcar leasing company
Unit	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Carload unit (for non-intermodal traffic) 2. Trailer or container unit (for intermodal traffic) 3. Measure of rail volume
Unit Train	Freight trains moving great tonnages of a single bulk product between two points without intermediate yarding and switching. Such trains cut costs because they eliminate intermediate stops in yards and reduce cycle times. Also known as a shuttle.
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture Glossary Top
Want Date	Date and time that a rail shipment is wanted at a customer location Glossary Top
Waybill	Document covering a shipment. A waybill shows the forwarding and receiving station, the names of consignor and consignee, the car initials and number, the routing, the description and weight of the commodity, instructions for special services, the rate, total charges, advances and waybill reference for previous services and the amount prepaid. Created from shipping instructions.
Yard	System of tracks with defined local boundaries, which provides for the making up of trains, storing of cars and other related functions
Yard Block	Group of cars classified for movement to the same yard
Yard Move	Train or rail cars ordered to move from one location to another in a rail yard
Zero Mileage	Car hire for privately owned freight cars that do not earn any mileage allowance to be paid to the private car owner Glossary Top

Abbreviations

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Abbreviation

Definition

A.A.R.	Association of American Railroads
A/C	Account
B2B	Business to Business
Bbl.	Barrel
Bdl.	Bundle
B/L	Bill of Lading
Bls.	Bales
B/O	Bad Order
Bu.	Bushel
Bx.	Box
C.F.C.	Consolidated Freight Classification
C/L	Carload
C/O	In care of
C.O.F.C.	Container On Flat Car
Cwt.	Hundredweight (100 weight units, such as pounds)
Dely.	Delivery
Dem.	Demurrage
Div.	Division Abbreviations Top
Dunn.	Dunnage
EFT	Electronic Funds Transfer
Est.	Estimated
F.&W.	Feed and Water
Gal.	Gallon
G.T.	Gross ton
Hgt.	Height
I.C.C.	Interstate Commerce Commission
Inc.	Incorporated

Jct.	Junction
K.D.	Knocked Down
K.D.F.	Knocked Down Flat
L.&D.	Loss and Damage
L.C.L.	Less Than Carload
Ltd.	Limited
Ltge.	Lighterage
L.T.L.	Less Than Truckload
Mdse.	Merchandise
Memo	Memorandum
Min.	Minimum
Min. wt.	Minimum weight Abbreviations Top
Misc.	Miscellaneous
M.I.T.	Milling In Transit
Mty.	Empty
N.E.C.	Not Elsewhere Classified
No.	Number
N.O.I.	Not Otherwise Indexed
N.O.I.B.N.	Not Otherwise Indexed By Name
N.O.S.	Not Otherwise Specified
Nstd.	Nested
N. T.	Net Ton
Ntfy.	Notify
O.S.&D.	Over, Short and Damage
O.T.	Other Than
Pcs.	Pieces
P.H.P.	Packing House Products

Pkg.	Package
Q.D.C.	Quality Distribution Center
R/C	Reconsigned, Reconsignment
Refrig.	Refrigeration
Rel.	Released
R.E.R.	Railway Equipment Register
R.I.T.	Refining In Transit Abbreviations Top
R.P.O.	Railway Post Office
R.R.	Railroad
Rwy.	Railway
Ry.	Railway
S.I.T.	Storage In Transit
S.L.&C.	Shipper's Load and Count
S.L.&T.	Shipper's Load and Tally
Stg., Stge	Storage
Sta.	Station
Stn.	Station
S.U.	Set Up
Swtg	Switching
Sys.	System
T.O.F.C.	Trailer On Flat Car
U.F.C.	Uniform Freight Classification
Vol.	Volume
W.B.	Waybill
Whse.	Warehouse
Wt.	Weight
W.W.&I.B.	Western Weighing and Inspection Bureau

Yd.

Yard [Abbreviations Top](#)